

**Claims**

1. A liquid or powdered and reconstitutable nutritional composition comprising a protein source, a source of digestible carbohydrates and a source of dietary fibre, characterised in that it has an energy density of 1.3-1.8 kcal/ml and dietary fibre in an amount of more than 2.5g/100ml.

5 2. The composition according to claim 1 in which the energy density is between 1.4-1.6 kcal/ml.

10 3. The composition according to claim 1 or 2, in which the source of fibre is selected from the group of soluble non-starch polysaccharides, insoluble non-starch polysaccharides, oligosaccharides, and mixtures of these.

15 4. The composition according to any of the preceding claims, in which the source of fibre comprises 20-40% by weight of soluble non-starch polysaccharides, 30-60% by weight of insoluble polysaccharides, and 20-40% by weight of oligosaccharides.

20 5. The composition according to any of the preceding claims, in which the soluble fibre is acacia gum, insoluble fibre is provided by pea outer fibre and oligosaccharides are fructooligosaccharides.

25 6. The composition according to any of the preceding claims, which has a viscosity of 30 – 80 mPas.

7. The composition according to any of the preceding claims, which comprises 4.5 to 6g protein /100ml.

30 8. The composition according to any of the preceding claims further comprising a source of lipids.

35 9. The composition according to any of the preceding claims, characterised in that it is clinically free of lactose.

10. The composition according to any of claims 1-9 for providing nutrition and improving the digestive tract and bowel function and/or to maintaining or restoring a well-balanced gut flora.

5 11. The composition according to any of claims 1-9, for enhancing mucosal barrier function.

12. The composition according to any of claims 1-9 for promoting gut health or comfort in an elderly patient.

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13. A method for preparing the nutritional composition according to any of claims 1-9, comprising the steps of

- mixing components of the composition, and,
- hydrating the components to provide a liquid mixture.

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14. A method for providing nutrition and improving the digestive tract and bowel function and/or to maintaining or restoring a well-balanced gut flora comprising the step of administering to a individual the nutritional composition according to any of claim 1 - 12.

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15. A method for enhancing mucosal function in a human individual, comprising the step of administering to a human individual the nutritional composition according to any of claim 1 – 12.

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